

## **User interface design for a start-up: Online beauty shop**

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<p>This thesis contains information about our own start-up, which is going to operate in online beauty market in European Union. The major focus in this thesis is made on creating a step-by-step plan of user interface design for our own web site. We are a team of two people, who are planning to open online beauty shop at the end of 2015 using Word-Press platform for this purpose.</p> <p>This report presents a detailed information about our start-up: the industry, products we are planning to offer, as well as, how we are planning to create a web site. Since we are going to operate in online beauty market, we have to choose a range of beauty products, which would be suitable for our customers, thus I have done a pre-research about the latest trends in beauty products in order to find an appropriate list of those. I have examined several platforms where women share their opinions about the beauty products, watched the review videos and gained an understanding about the needs of our target group.</p> <p>Moreover, we are planning to create a blog on our web-site, where we could share news and information about the products. In this thesis I cover information about the articles we would like to post in our blog, the goals and aims of the blog, as well as, writing style and the main focus.</p> <p>I have listed a range of necessary steps and principles of user interface design. Since user interface design is a crucial and important step in creating a web site. Moreover, I have listed a range of latest trends in user interface design, which would help our web site to be trendy and user-friendly. Consequently, the literature review concerning user interface design is meant to help our team to create a web site, which would fit exactly our industry and needs of our target group.</p> <p>At the end of this report can be found the infographics and all the visual materials concerning our web page. Moreover, I have decided to test those visual materials on a small group of people in order to comprehend how people perceive our ideas and vision of good and simple user interface design. The focus group found the given materials as good and simple user interface design, and approved that they would use our services. The more detailed results and description of a focus group can be found at the end of this report.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> User interface design, Web design, Start-up, Online Shopping, User experience	

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# 1 Introduction

This thesis is written in order to create a detailed step-by-step plan, which will help us to create and develop a proper and simple user interface design for our web site. Thus, the major goal of this thesis is to examine the literature about user interface design principles and latest trends, which can be applied to our web site. Moreover, the aim of this thesis is to create a mock-up of the web site in order to test it on a focus group. The aim of mock-up testing is to comprehend how women perceive the ideas we have; how they like or dislike the choice of colours, fonts; is the user interface design that we have developed simple and pleasant for a focus group. Moreover, this thesis describes the process of creating a blog for a web site: content, style of writing, goals and aims of having a blog.

A web site and its design are the “face” and “brand identity” of a company. In order to create a unique and user-friendly web site, it is important to figure out the needs of potential customers and users of a web site; to find a focus and comprehend what kind of message has to be delivered to the users. Thus, user interface design is an important and crucial step, which cannot be avoided.

A proper user interface design can become a key to success for a company because people like simple things they can comprehend how to use intuitively. Thus, I have decided to write a thesis on this topic because I am interested in the principles and latest trends of user interface design, and I am planning to open my online shop. Moreover, I have always been interested in the development of the Internet and its possibilities.

Current Internet user figures suggest that there are more than 2.5 billion users worldwide in year 2015. Since the late 1990s the Internet gave a possibility to its users not only to use e-mails and online search but also to enable interaction and to reshape traditional media commutations. Internet gives a possibility to watch movies, to read news, to share information, to watch television and to do many other things. A user can find a lot of licensed content in the formats of audio and video, games and writings. Moreover, Internet enabled entertainment for many users, and such Internet gi-

ants as YouTube, Netflix, Spotify, and Tumblr were made exactly for the needs of the users. (The Statistics Portal, 2015)

Since Internet is one of the most developing and most growing areas, and I am a business student. I believe, that not many students have enough money to start their business right after the graduation, however, Internet gives a possibility to try this out. I wanted to involve my hobbies – I like writing and make up. Those things develop my imagination and excite me a lot, so I have decided that it would be great to combine my hobbies and ideas concerning the business.

I have decided to share my ideas with my friend, who was also interested to create own start-up. As a result of this discussion, we have decided to work on this project together. We have decided that I will be responsible for collecting information about the potential clients, communication, planning and developing the user interface design and writing blogs-posts for our web site. Consequently, this is the reason why I have chosen such topic for my thesis.

### **1.1 Business idea and the commissioner**

We are a team of two enthusiasts, who are presenting their business idea. The major goal of our start-up is to create an online shop, which offers beauty products for a reasonable prices, which are not presented in the local stores. I know a frustration of many women, who would like to try certain beauty products but they do not know where to order those products; they are not sure about the seller and quality of the products. Usually, the costs of delivery, for example from USA, are too expensive, and no one wants to pay the same amount for the delivery as for the ordered products. I have faced these problems and inconvenience many time, thus, I would like to help other women to get the products they want without waiting too long and paying too much.

We have decided that it would be better to order beauty products from the United States because those brands we want to offer our clients are not available in European countries. However, the chosen brands are well-known, and we can be sure that the

quality of the products is on a high level. We are planning to sign the contracts with several brands, which produce beauty products and with wholesale shops.

There are several objective reasons why we would like to start such a business. Women in Europe express their regret that they cannot buy the products they would like to try in their countries. (Partington, 2014) Thus, we would like to give women a possibility to buy those beauty products on our web site. We believe that our customers will benefit from our shop: they will not be obligated to pay custom clearance because we are located in European Union; they will not have to long for their packages, and they will get a chance to buy cosmetics they want to try.

The target group of our business are women of age 15-30. We have chosen this kind of target group because we are also somewhere in the middle of this age group, and we understand the needs of our potential customers. Moreover, in this case we have a complete impression of what kind of language we have to use in order our customers could understand us and our vision about the business, what kind of products to offer and how to attract our customers. I believe that understanding the needs of a customer is one of the most crucial aspects in building a business because there always has to be a great communication and intuitive comprehension of a customer.

I believe that the most important step, which lead me to the decision to open own online beauty shop and to find out about the needs of our potential customers, was my small but very effective pre-research about the industry and latest trends in make-up. First of all, it was important for me to evaluate the current situation on a beauty market, and to find out the state of relevance of such business. I have described the results of my evaluation below.

I have decided to narrow the target group to women from 15-30 years old. Firstly, as I mentioned before, I am in the middle of this age group, and I understand what women of this age group like, what they want and look for. Secondly, my research proved that this age group is mostly involved in the industry (blogs, YouTube, Pinterest), and this target group is looking for not expensive make-up products. Moreover, I decided to talk to people face-to-face and to ask their opinion about our business idea. I was

pleasantly surprised that many women met the idea very enthusiastic. When there is a demand there has to be a supply, thus, our team decided to act.

I have decided to explore the market and to figure out what women think about the beauty industry and make-up. I spent a lot of time reading blogs about make-up, where bloggers were describing the products, giving a detailed description of advantages and disadvantages of the products. Moreover, many women are commenting these blogs, and I could see not only the opinion of a blogger but also the opinion of people, who are just ordinary buyers. Thus, it was pretty easy to get a list of the products, which are not too expensive but have a great quality. Mostly, these are the products of popular brand in USA, however, none of those are presented in European Union.

The other crucial information source concerning our target group was YouTube, which counts enormous amount of beauty-bloggers, who are presenting new beauty products, testing those and telling their opinions. Moreover, beauty-bloggers present the latest trends in make-up because they cooperate with many popular make-up brands, thus, it is a useful tool to follow the trends and to get to know the reviews in a short period of time.

When I started to read the comments below the videos, I found many comments from women, who told that they are interested in certain products but there is a huge challenge for them to order those products. Thus, that is the major reason why we believe our business is going to work well – we are going to offer our target group the products they want, and the major advantage is the delivery and no custom clearance. Moreover, the brands that we would like to present on our web site are well-known, and brand loyalty could help us to attract our customers.

Moreover, in order to walk in our customers' shoes, I have decided to set an experiment. I decided to buy some of the products from the list that I have drawn up for our business, and to check the validity of the reviews in the blogs and YouTube channels. I have chosen various products in order to be able to establish my own point of view and to double-check the validity of reviews from the Internet. My experiment showed

that all the products I have ordered from the list were perfect. There were not expensive but I was very happy with the quality of ordered products.

My experiment showed me that it is a great way of examining beauty market through the ordinary buyers because their reviews are honest and trustful. Moreover, such way of setting a list of products would help us to avoid many possible failures because we exactly have a clear vision of the quality and popularity of the products.

## **1.2 Aims and objectives**

It is obvious, that the major and fundamental goal of this project is to get the final product – web site. In order to be able to reach the final goal, my objective is to examine the existing principles and trends in user interface design; to choose the range of principles for our industry; and to be able to comprehend the needs of a potential customer.

Consequently, to conduct a step-by-step plan of necessary actions concerning the web site. The plan will be divided into several steps, which I am going to follow in order to create a web site. Some of those steps I would like to test with a small group of people, who will give their feedback about the user interface design: how they find it; is it comprehensible and user-friendly.

My aim is to gain an understanding what kind of navigation to choose; what colours would be the best and most suitable for our web site; what typography to choose, what kind of widgets and plugins are the most useful and necessary for our business.

The other aim is to find a way how to attract people, and in our case this is a creation of interactive blog, which would help us to build our brand identity. The major goal of this blog is to help our customers to choose the products they need and to inform them about the news concerning new products.



At the end of this thesis I would like to present a reader the visual materials concerning a web site. I would like to show how the home page of our web site will look like; the user profile page's layout; to present the typography and colour scheme.

## **2 Literature review**

In this chapter I am going to analyse the existing data on user interface design in order to gain an understanding what exactly term “user interface design” stands for, and why user interface is a crucial step for a web site’s developer.

This chapter consists of three sub-chapters. The first sub-chapter clarifies a reader what is a user interface design and why it is important when creating a web site. The second introduces a reader the major steps and principles that are used in user interface design. The third sub-chapter is covers the latest trends in user interface design. The fourth chapter gives the objective reason to a reader why WordPress was chosen as a platform that our team is going to use for a web site development.

### **2.1 User interface design definition and its importance**

In this sub-chapter I am going to clarify the definition of the user interface design in order to comprehend what this term means, and why it is important to follow the principles of user interface design.

User interface is a part of a computer system with which a user interacts in order to undertake her tasks and achieve her goals. Moreover, user interface design helps to structure all the information on a web-site in order to help people to contribute to that information and be able to work with it in the simplest way. (Stone, 2005)

User interface design is a part of web design that corresponds to making a web-site simple and user friendly. The major idea behind this tool is to make the navigation and design of a web-site as convenient for a user as possible. Moreover, it is very important to create such user interface design, which does not include unnecessary tasks and steps from the user’s side. It has to have a balance between functionality and technical part. A good user interface provides a user-friendly experience, allowing a user to interact with the software or hardware in a natural and intuitive way. (Tech Terms, 2009)

The user interface can arguably include the total user experience, which may include the aesthetic appearance of the device, response time, and the content that is presented to the user within the context of the user interface. (Rouse, 2005)

This terms also means the multi-tasking such as user and organisational tasks, needs, and goals; ease and simplicity of use; clarity and beauty of execution; flexibility and scalability of the design across multiple devices. It contains servers, databases and programming; all the content including text, pictures, infographics; architecture of information. (Conors, 2013)

In few words, user interface design is a tool, which helps organisations to avoid the mistakes in web-designing. The goal of the user interface design is to make people want to use your web-site.

User interface helps the users to achieve their goals and reach their needs in terms of a specific web platform. However, it is important to figure out those needs and goals beforehand in order to offer a proper service for the potential users.

It is extremely important to conduct a research in terms of user interface design and to comprehend what kind of product you want to get at the end. The main problem and difficulty an organisation can meet is no pre-research done before creating the user interface design. If there was no research done beforehand, an organisation can meet a range of difficulties – the needs and goals of the use will not be met, people will probably avoid using the platform because of lack of simplicity and clear navigation.

(Zandbergen)

## **2.2 The major steps and principles of user interface design**

There are three factors that are important to be followed in user interface design: acceptance, visibility and development. Each of those factors influence on the final product, and it is crucial to follow all of them.

Visibility factors stand for human interaction and visual identity, which include the brand identity of a company; human abilities, product identity, simple and clear model of a web site. (Marcus, 1993)

Moreover, visibility is the first thing that user sees when entering a web site, thus, it is important to provide a user with simple instructions, so that a user can comprehend what actions to take. (Mehta, 2011)

Development factors help to improve the visual communication, and the main task is to take into consideration customisability, component libraries and prototyping. (Marcus, 1993)

Acceptance factors stand for corporate politics, installed base and documentation. (Marcus, 1993)

The first principle of user interface design is always user profiling. This principle follows the rule “for whom we are doing this?” It is crucial to understand the needs and abilities of the users, and to provide them the necessary service. Thus, it is needed to brainstorm about average users and to find a detailed description of their needs.

When creating user interface design, it is important to answer three main questions:

- 1) What kind of goals does a user have?
- 2) What are the skills and experience of a user?
- 3) What are the needs of a user?

When these questions are answered, the next step is to find out the best solution of user interface that will help users to achieve their goals. (Marcus, 1993)

Sometimes the best solution is to contact potential users or to specify a target group in order to be able to meet the goals and needs of the users. This specific criteria and description of an average user is one of the most helpful tools on this stage of web site creation. (Ambler, 2014)

The other principle is to follow the consistency. In other words, if you set a certain task for one button, then it has to complete the same task with the other button. The buttons have to be located in consistent places on all the windows, those have to have the same content on the labels and deliver the same message. Moreover, it is crucial to use consistent colour scheme. This principle will help to enable user interaction and build a good mental model of a web site. (Porter)

The other principle of user interface design is to set a range of rules for the users. It is necessary to create a page with frequently asked questions in order to be able to help a user to interact with a web site. It will save developer's time and time of a user. This principle also refers to the consistency – when a web site or an application works consistently, it is possible to explain the rules only once and to give a simple and clear description of how to use a web site step-by-step. (Wiley, 1997)

The next principle in user interface design is a navigation. It can become one of the most crucial principles because if the navigation is poor and not consistent, most likely, a developer is going to lose users because no one wants to come to know the particulars how to use a web site, which action to take – it has to be comprehensible for a user on an intuitive level. Thus, navigation has to be consistent, comprehensible and simple. Moreover, it is important to remember that users might work with the system in a bit different ways, thus, system needs to be flexible and allow users to support their own approach. It is crucial to remember about navigation screen. Since we are living in Western society and we all read from the left to the right, it would be better to place a “menu” button on the left side. (Ambler, 2014)

Text that is used on a web site has a great power and influence on the users. Thus, it is crucial to comprehend what exactly a developer wants to place on a web site, and what kind of information a developer would like to bring to the users. The messages and labels have to be effective and clear in order to interest a user. In other words, the text that is placed on the screen is a main source of information for your users, and it builds a mental model of a web site. (Mimon, 2011)

It is recommended to use full words and sentences instead of using abbreviations because it would be easier for a user to understand the message a developer tries to bring up. It is also worth to mention that any kind of message should be written in a polite and positive manner.

A great example of wrong message is the following:

“The information you have entered is wrong!”

Instead of that it would be better to write a message, which explains users what exactly they have typed wrong:

“Please, type an account number that is eight digits in length”.

The second example explains user what exactly they should type and enter in order to proceed with an operation. A developer has to help and support users. (Ambler, 2014)

The next principle in user interface design is to use widgets. Those are helping to make the process of a web site development much easier. There is a wide range of widgets, and it is always possible to choose an appropriate widget exactly for a specific industry. If a developer uses a ready-made themes for a web site, the widgets are included, and a developer can choose the widgets that are necessary for a business. (Ambler, 2014)

The choice of colours is also one of the user interface design principles. The main rules of this principle is again consistency. There has to be a main colour and a colour, which is going to be used for the highlight purposes. However, the most important rule of this principle is not to choose too many colours because the variety of different colours on a platform can distract the users from the message a developer wants to deliver. Thus, the best choice would be to choose about three colours – the main colour and highlight colours. Moreover, this principle also concerns fonts and those sizing. It is recommended to use only few fonts in order not to lose the identity and the whole mental model of the platform. One to three fonts would be enough in order to create a proper user interface design. (Sommerville, 2004)

Moreover, in user interface design it is necessary to follow the contrast rule, and a developer has to remember that the text should be simply readable. The rule is pretty much simple, and a developer has to stick to it: when choosing a light text – choose the dark background, and in the opposite way – light background-dark text. The main goal of this user interface design principle is to help the users to read the text easily and to perceive information in the most convenient way. (Ambler, 2014)

The next important principles refers to the human factor – users might make mistakes when using a platform, and it is possible that they might delete or lose the data they need. Thus, it is crucial to think about make such user interface, which will help users to recover information if it is lost. (Mimon, 2011)

User interface design should be smart but not too complicated. The users have to comprehend, which action to take even if they have not used the platform before. Thus, it is necessary to figure out the average knowledge of potential users, and to help them to orient and interact with a platform in the simplest way.

The busy user interface is a bad interface, and the experimental results approve this statement. Crowded platforms are very difficult in use, and the principle is to not overload the overall density of the screen more than for 40 percent, whereas local density within groupings should not exceed 62 percent. (Ambler, 2014)

The next principle is to group items in a logical way, if those do not match or have nothing in common, it is better to separate such items. It would help users to comprehend better their needs and not to spend much time looking for the items they want to find. (Ambler, 2014)

### **2.3 The latest trends in user interface design**

It is obvious that every industry is rapidly growing, especially the industry, which is connected with computers and technologies. In this chapter a reader can find information about the latest trends in user interface design.

The first trend is minimalism, which is very popular for many platforms including such giants as Google and Microsoft. Detailed and structured icons and buttons are being replaced to simpler versions. Moreover, many companies try to use not more than two colours. The main rule of this trends is to keep everything simple, minimalistic, to use solid colours and simple inscriptions. (Puri, 2014)

The second trend is called skeuomorphism, in other words, it is a way of making people feel emotional connection with an object, to make it intuitively familiar and traditional. This is a way a developer can create a close connection with a user, and it is one of the most crucial things in user interface design. (Vukovic, 2015)

Laser focus is also a very common trend in user interface design. The main idea of this principle is to put a visual focus on one task. It helps a user to find out immediately how to act and what the application is about. It saves time of users and allows them to reach their goals as soon as possible. A good example of laser focus trend is Google – when a user enters a home page of Google, there appears a search line, where a user can find the necessary information. (Vukovic, 2015)

Context sensitive navigation trend helps the developers to make a user interface design simpler. The only question that matters in this principle is to comprehend, which navigation elements should be on screen all the time and what can be shown only in certain actions. (Randall, 2015)

The next trend is called “collapsed content”, which means that it is not necessary to have all the buttons and menu extensive, it would be better to have only one button, which explains the task, and if users decide to expand the button, they will see the whole content. This principle allows a developer not to overload a screen with a text, and gives a user a power of actions. (Vukovic, 2015)

Since it became very popular to use mobile applications and surf Internet using various devices (tablets, mobile phones), the next trend may become crucial for a user interface design. This trend offers to create long pages so that a user can scroll page instead of clicking “next page”. It takes more effort from the user’s side, and it loads better. If a



user has slow Internet connection, this principle is the best to help a user to reach the content faster. (Yadav, 2015)

The next trend is called “content chunking”, which means that a developer has to split text into smaller visual chunks. The idea behind this trend is to make a user to comprehend the information easier. It is an obvious fact that no one likes to read long texts, and a user may get bored and distracted from the content a developer tries to state. Thus, it is recommended to split text into small paragraphs with catchy and interesting headings and to put some pictures and infographics in-between. This principle makes a platform more visual and comprehensible. (Vukovic, 2015)

The last but not the least trend is typography. Many developers are paying a lot of attention to the fonts and colours they use in order to create a visual and remaining in a memory web sites. Thus, the choice of the fonts has to have a great meaning for a developer because this may become an identity of a platform. (Gekko, 2015)

## **2.4 WordPress platform**

In this sub-chapter I would like to present a perfect platform for those, who are just planning to start their business. Moreover, in this chapter I would like to present the facts, which assured us to use exactly WordPress.

The first thing that assured me to use exactly WordPress was the fact that I am familiar with the platform because I have a web site on it, and I know that it is easy to use, especially, when one is not familiar with all the details and aspects of IT. Thus, it is the best choice for those people, who are willing to start their business right now without spending enormous amount of money on qualified professionals, who could create a web site. It is easy and fast to do it on your own. Moreover, WordPress is a search-engine friendly platform, which is very important for a business. (Aspire Internet Design, 2015)

The first benefit about the WordPress is that it is completely free to start using the platform. The only thing a businessperson has to do in order to start using WordPress

is to buy a hosting and domain. The domain activates very fast, and one can get right to the work. Moreover, WordPress gives a possibility to its users to improve the web site on individual tastes and needs. It is always possible to change a code or activate the necessary tools in order to improve a workload of a web site. (Rampton, 2015)

The second advantage of WordPress platform is that it is secure. It is one the most crucial vision of the company – the security of the users. Moreover, if a user wants to improve security terms, it is always possible to install extra plugins, which will help to secure a web site. (Creative, 2015)

The third, and one of the most meaningful things about WordPress is that it is totally customisable, and one can choose a specific and unique design, plugins and widgets, themes and many other interesting and important things for a web site creation. Everything an owner of a web site wants to have or install is possible. WordPress is a web site, which has a great user interface design, and this platform is easy to use. (Rampton, 2015)

The next important aspect is that WordPress has a good and responsive customer support. If there appears a problem with a workload of a web site, customer support will always be there for a user. (Rampton, 2015)

The next fact about a WordPress is that it is mobile-friendly, and an owner of a web site does not have to think how to create a mobile version of a web site because WordPress thought about this beforehand. Moreover, this platform has a perfect system of uploading and editing media. There is a special Media Library Screen where an owner of a web site can work with all kind of media files. (Rampton, 2015)

The next bonus, which WordPress provides to its users, is that if an owner is not satisfied with a hosting provider, it is easy to change a provider without losing information on a web site. WordPress takes care of redirecting all the files and design of a web site to a server of a new hosting provider. (Rampton, 2015)

The other benefit to use WordPress and be sure that it is a good platform to start a business is that many famous organisations use exactly this platform for their online presence. WordPress is used by such business giants as Forbes, eBay, Sony Music, BBC America and The New Yorker. (Peter, 2014)

### **3 User interface design for our start-up**

In this chapter I am going to present a step-by-step plan in terms of user interface design for own start-up. Since I have examined the existing principles and major steps in user interface design, I decided to list only those, which answer the requirements of chosen industry – beauty market.

#### **3.1 Step 1: User profiling**

Since the user profiling principle is one of the most crucial in a user interface design, and it is the basic step a developer cannot skip, I have decided to conduct a small pre-research within our target group. I have asked women personally about their needs concerning the beauty products: what do they look for in the beauty products, what is missing on our market and what they would like to buy. I have read a lot of articles and blogs in order to comprehend what women find trendy, what are their needs and wishes. I have examined many videos on YouTube concerning the chosen industry, and I have collected information about the needs and abilities of our potential customers. Thus, the target group and the goals are set and comprehensible.

Consequently, as I have mentioned before, we have decided to focus on a target group, which includes women from age of 15-30. I believe that this is the most optimal decision because we are in the same age, and, as the result, we can comprehend the needs of our target group. Since user interface design is based on comprehending the needs of a customer, this is the best thing we can do about our start-up. Moreover, this target group was chosen because of my pre-research that I have described in the Introduction chapter. Mainly, women from age 15-30 are interested in beauty products, which we would like to offer our customers, and also this group of women is interested in blogs and videos, which are connected with our industry. Thus, social media could be a great instrument in creating emotional connection with our customers.

The main question: “for whom we are doing this?” is pretty understandable, as well, however, it is important to answer the next three questions in order to be able to create a proper user interface design for clients.

There is a range of goals that an average user might have: to try new products, which are not available in the local stores, to buy the beauty products for a reasonable and affordable prices, to get the products in the shortest terms. Most of the women like beautiful things, thus, they might expect the design to be simple but catchy and pretty, simple and emotionally similar to their nature.

### **3.2 Step 2: Colour scheme and fonts**

One of the major principles of a user interface design is consistency, and we have decided that we will use only three colours and two fonts of our web site. Since our industry is a beauty market and the target group is women, we need to choose the colours, which are nice-looking and feminine. Moreover, the fact that we are going to operate in European region, where people read from left-to-right, we are going to place all the content according to this rule.

The main goal is to create an emotional connection between our customers and the products we are going to sell. As the developer, I believe that I have to think about the meanings of the colours and what kind of psychological associations does a colour have. When I started choosing colours for the web site, I thought about our target group and the list of products we would like to sell. The main criteria of choice is finding a colour, which is associated with women, which attracts them.

From the psychological point of view the colours and shades, which are called “tints” are considered to be feminine. These are the colours that are mixed with white, and women think that these shades are attractive. Many companies and businesses that are involved in beauty, health and spa industries are using exactly this kind of colour scheme. Since we need to find a colour, which stands exactly for the feminine colour, we have to choose shades of pink because various shades of pink are associated in our

European culture with women. Moreover, this colour also has a meaning, which connects us with our industry – beauty. (Neil Patel, Ritika Puri, 2013)

Thus, we have decided to use the light-pink background, which is called “Bisque” (#FBE6C7). The main colour of the texts is going to be dark-grey (#333333). It is going to be a good and easy-readable colour scheme for our web-site. There is a great contrast between these shades, and this is exactly what we need for our web site. The accents and highlights will be written with bright fuchsia colour, which is called “Light Coral” (#FA6282). The main task of “Light Coral” shade is to bring the vividness to and to finish the feminine design of a web site.



Figure 1



Figure 2

We will use only two fonts for our web site ”Wisdom Script” will be used for a logo and “Oswald” for the rest text. We were trying to find a font, which does not have sharp angles because from the psychological point of view women do not like aggressive and acute lines. Moreover, this font is simple and easy-readable, thus it was the best option we could find.



Figure 3



Figure 4

### 3.3 Step 3: Content

There is an important principle in user interface design, which concerns text and content. Thus, we are planning to think of catchy headings, which would attract users. We will use those headings for our interactive slider. We believe that we do not have to overload menu line, so we are going to use simple and clear labels: the products, which are meant for the face will be named as one word “Face”, all the products, which are meant for lip care – “Lips” and so on. The labels have to be short in clear. If our users want to read more about the products, how to use those – we will be writing our blog. The more concrete and detailed information about the structure and content of the blog can be found in sub-chapter 3.6.

We will follow the rule writing full sentences and using no abbreviations. I can say it from my own experience that I do not like to read long texts. However, a text should be informative and briefly describe the products, so that I could understand the characteristics of a product and to make a right choice. I have to be responsible for the information I give to the users, it needs to be correct and comprehensible.

Thus, the style of writing has be friendly, catchy, and it should impress our customers. The major stress, of course, will be made on a blog, which is meant to become the most interactive and informative part of a web site. However, it is also important for us to remember about “home page” and “shop page”.

We are not going to write long descriptions of a product because it can distract people, however, we are going to write basic and informative bullet points. For example, if we offer a hand lotion, we will write the following text:

Name of a product: Hand lotion

Description: This hand lotion is perfect for dry skin, and you can use it every day. It is great to moisturise your skin and keep it forever young and beautiful.

Price: 5, 20€

Add to cart

This is concrete and pretty informative way of writing, so that a user can easily comprehend what the products is; is it suitable for one’s skin type. If a user wants to reader more about the product, it would be possible to click on a link, which is going to lead to a blog post where I will write the full description of a product. This way of writing would help the users to save their time and to read all the necessary information about the product.

### **3.4 Step 4: Widgets and plugins**

Since our teams is planning to use a ready-made theme for our web-site, we are going to choose only several widgets. For the own web site I would like to install “currency” and “language” widgets. It would be useful because even though many countries in Europe are using euro as their currency, some of the countries have their own curren-



cy, and it would be more comfortable for the users from Sweden or the United Kingdom to see the prices in their habitual money.

Moreover, we are planning to translate our web site to several languages: English (the default language), Finnish (since our location is Finland) and Russian (since this is the language that is used in some neighbour countries). Thus, we need a widget that is meant for a proper translation of the terms on a web site.

We will also use plugins because I have used those for my own blog, and I am assured that those make a perception of a web site easier. Nowadays, there is a range of plugins for each purpose. Since we would like to present informational videos about the products and novelties, we need to install a plugin, which allows to post videos on a web site and our blog.

The other plugins is needed is a user counter. It is helpful for us in order to comprehend how many people are visits a web page, what they are looking for, how long they are staying on a web site, where did they proceed. It can allow us to improve a web site and become more user friendly. Moreover, it is a great tool take everything under a control in order to be able to guide a business.

### **3.5 Step 5: Navigation principles**

First of all, when users are visiting a web site, they have to comprehend clearly what this web site is about, what are the mission and vision of a company.

Thus, we are going to create a header picture, which is going to tell our users, in which industry we are operating, what kind of products we are offering. For this purpose we are planning to draw our own picture in Adobe Photoshop. The idea is to connect our logo with the header in order to follow the consistency and idea of our platform.

The actual plan is to create a logo and a header picture with a multiplication toon, in our case it is going to be a cat holding beauty products in its paws. The choice of logo with a cat is not accident in our case. One of the existing make-up elements is called “cat eye”, thus, we have decided to select the name “Cat Eye Make Up” in order to

create a connection with the industry. Consequently, the logo we have chosen is connected with the name of a company. Moreover, we believe that this kind of logo can create a memorable identity of our business. In the attachment a reader can find our logo and the header picture.

Under the header there is going to be located a menu line. We have decided not to overload lateral, and to use the trend, which is called “collapsed text”.

The menu line will be consisting of the following sections:

Make Up: Eyes, Lips, Face

Make Up bundles

Sale: Eyes, Lips, Face

Our blog

Three icons: magnifier (for the search button), face of a human (for the profile page) and cart (for the shopping cart)

The purpose of using the principle of “collapsed text” is to give a possibility to users to expand only the button they want to check, and so their screen will not be overloaded with an information they are not interested in.

After the menu line we are going to place an interactive slider. It will going to show the groups of products we are offering with catchy headings on it. We believe that it is a great visual tool in order to interest our target group. When they enter the home page – they will get familiar with a range of products we are offering.

After the slider we would like to repeat the menu with all the products listed by their function: Eyes, Lips, Face. The users will see the whole range of products for each product group. For example:

### **Lips**

Lipsticks

Lip Gloss

Lip Liner

Lip stains

This step is made in order to not make the users to scroll back the whole page in order to find the products. It will save their time and allow them to see the whole list of the products once again.

If scrolling down the page, users will see the rest of information. The bottom of the page will be divided into several boxes. On the left side we are going to place “About us” page, our mission and vision, our contacts. Right after that we are going to put “Customer Service” box, which will include all the necessary information about the service, such as, “delivery and returns”, “privacy”, “terms and conditions”, “payments” and “FAQ”. Since we live in a world, where social media is very important, we believe, that it would be necessary to have a little box, where we are going to put the information about us in social media: Facebook, YouTube, Blog, Instagram, Twitter. The next box is going to be called “Newsletter”. If our users are willing to know about the news and products, sales and discounts, they can subscribe to our newsletter. The bottom line of the page is going to contain a line with a copyright and contact information.

We will need to create a FAQ page in order to explain our users the rules and conditions of our web site. Since we have not launched our web site yet, we do not know what kind of questions might appear from our users, thus, we will think of list of the questions, which we would like to find answers on if we would be the users. It is important to put yourself in the shoes of your clients in order to comprehend what may become unintelligible for them. Here are some of FAQ we would like to cover:

1. How do I use a profile page?
2. How do I restore a cart with missing products?
3. How can I pay for the products?
4. When I will receive my package?
5. How can I return the products are not suitable for me?
6. How can I change a wrong address?
7. What should I do if I do not receive my package?
8. How can I use a promo code?

## 9. How can I receive a refund?

The other rules and conditions will be listed in the box “Customer Service”, which users can find in the bottom page under the menu. It is meant to explain the users what they should do in cases when they

### 3.6 Step 6: Blog

I have mentioned that we are planning to have a blog on our web site. The major idea to have this blog is connected with the popularity of the social media. The fact that social media and social networks are very popular nowadays, prove the statistics: Facebook has more than 1.2 billion monthly active users, which is almost half of Internet users worldwide. (Statista, 2015)

Since social media are popular, and people are sharing various content on their pages, most likely, people will have a chance to get-to-know with our web site exactly through the social media. Thus, we need a platform, which is going to tell our customers about our business and products we are offering.

Moreover, beauty blogs are very popular, and Google’s statistics prove this fact. People are looking for the beauty blogs 8.100 times per month, which is the third position in the list of the most popular searches through Google. The more narrowed topic “a blog about make up” gets 2.900 searches per month, which means that these kind of blogs are very popular and Internet users are interested in such topics. (Hill, 2014)

The blog will be divided into several sub-categories: News (news about the web site, new arrivals), Looks (women will have a chance to see how the products we are offering are working on practice), Our products (short reviews and recommendations how to use products, what skin type those products suit). Moreover, I will post the content, which is not going to be connected with the assortment we offer in our shop. I am planning to write posts, which are connected with the beauty industry, for example, there will be posted various make-up tips. The idea is to find a balance

between commercial blog, which presents the products from the shop and informative and interesting content, which would be useful for the readers.

I will be the one, who updates the blog content, and I would like to create a blog, which would help our clients to choose the products they really need. It means that I am going to test the products that our clients can buy on a web site, and I am going to write the characteristics of a products, how it is better to use the products and how to combine it with other make-up products. This type of posts is meant to help women to choose something they really need and to attract them to buy other products.

The next sub-category, which I find the most interesting and potentially attractive to our target group, is to offer “a weekly look” posts. This is going to be the most interactive part of the blog, which will present our clients various ideas of make up they can do with our products. I am going to post the pictures of the products and the process of applying the make up, and the final version of the look. The main idea of having such category in a blog is that our clients will be able to see the texture and quality of the products; they will get fresh ideas of how it is possible to use the products; they will see the exact shades of lipsticks, eyeshadows and other make up products because there is also a huge problem to choose make up products on a web site. Usually, pictures with swatches of a make up are not realistic on the web sites, and it is very hard to choose a proper shade. We do not want to frustrate our customers, thus, we will provide them whole information and description of a product – true and realistic.

The next important thing that I have to think of is the style of our blog and the way of writing. Since our target group is young, I have to think about the visual materials and proper language.

I am planning to use a lot of images in a blog because it would help the reader to perceive the content easier and faster. Blog posts with images get 94% more views compared to those, which do not have pictures. Moreover, human’s brain processes visuals 60,000 times rather than text. (Jatani, 2015)

The style of writing is also one of the crucial aspects of the blogging. Since I need to keep the balance between commercial and entertaining posting, I have decided to mix the content about the products with interesting facts and tips about make-up. The texts I am going to post in a blog will be written in polite and enthusiastic manner. The main goals of the posts is to entertain the readers and to give them as much useful information as it is possible.

The posts are going to appear two times per week, and the amount of words per each post is going to be about 600-1000 words. I am planning to divide a post into several blocks with catchy and humorous headings and to separate each block with pictures, images or infographics. I believe that the readers would perceive text better if it is divided into several logical parts.

I do not want to write a blog in a formal language because it will not establish emotional connection with me as an author of a blog and the readers. The goal I would like to achieve is friendly communication, ability to share information and opinions. It is necessary to make a reader feel that she is talking to a friend and can ask for a piece of advice.

In order to make a text easy-readable and attractive, I am going to use metaphors and expressions. This always helps to diversify the text and make it funny, humorous and to establish an emotional connection with a reader. I guess that no one likes to read dull and cold texts where author does not put in emotions.

Moreover, as for every text, consistency, logical flow of writing and proper grammar also do not have to be avoided. It is an obvious fact that people do not read texts, which are written with mistakes. Moreover, texts, which are written grammatically and stylistically incorrect cannot inspire people and cannot be perceived seriously.

Since I have been blogging for a long time already, I can say that if people do not comment your blog posts then you have “a dead blog”. The major reason why people have blogs is that they want to share their ideas, thoughts and want to receive a feedback from others. Thus, I would like to ask questions the readers, to make them com-

ment the posts, and hear their opinion about the development of a blog. Sometimes, readers offer brilliant and engaging ideas, which a blogger has to transform into posts. I would like women to comment a blog and to get a comprehension how to develop a blog further.

### **3.7 Step 7: Testing a web site mock-up with a focus group**

The last but not the least thing that I had to do for my thesis was a test of a web site mock-up with a focus group. I have decided to create a focus group, which consisted of 9 women from age 18-29. The focus group included women from different countries: Finland (1 person, 22 years old), Russia (2 people, 22 and 27 years old), Estonia (1 person, 19 years old), Latvia (3 people, 22, 23 and 26 years old), and Denmark (1 person 25 years old) and Lithuania (1 person, 30 years old).

Women were asked to look at the pictures, which I have created in Adobe Photoshop in order to gain a visual model of a web site. I have offered them three main web site pages: home page, shop page and blog page. A focus group was supposed to comment on the pictures and express their opinion.

The main goal was to figure out how people perceive the mock-up. I have asked them several questions, which were important for me in terms of approval of a final design. First of all, I asked women about their first impression: how do they feel about the colours and fonts, the location of a menu line and the icons, which stand for profile, search button and cart.

Eight out of nine women from a focus group told that the first impression they had was pleasant. The last member of the focus group expressed the opinion that it would be better to choose a brighter colour of the menu line and offered to replace a menu on the left side. However, other women agreed that it is better to leave a menu on the same place because it is easy to percept information. It seemed to a focus group that the trend that I used, which is called “collapsed text” is a very good tool because they could click exactly on the necessary line without spending time on reading all the menu at once. All the ladies from a focus group loved the slider and found it declarative, at-

tractive and totally describing the industry. All the women from a focus group told that they see a clear connection between the logo and the name of a shop. A reader can find a mock-up of a home page below listed as Figure 4.

The next drawing that I showed to the focus group was shop page. Women told that it is easy to orient and sort products by category. They expressed the opinion that it would not be hard for them to use a shop because everything is easy-comprehensible. Moreover, the focus group told that it is a great thing that I have decided to place a filter button because it would save user's time and simplify the search of necessary product. A reader can find a mock-up of a shop page below listed as Figure 3.

The last drawing I showed to the focus group was a blog page. 7 out of 9 women were impressed by this page and evaluated it as stylish and trendy. Two other members told that blog is designed beautiful but they would like to see an example of a blog post that they could read in a blog. A reader can find a mock-up of a blog below listed as Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Moreover, I have decided that it would be good to ask the focus group about the list of FAQ that I have created. The focus group approved the

All in all, the comments and reflections about the mock-up were very positive. The focus group agreed with most of the choices that I have made were correct. After our discussion I asked women if they would like to use our services, and are they interested in the products we are going to offer. 7 out of 9 women told that they would be interested in our offer. Moreover, they appreciate that a web site that we are planning to create is user-friendly, and they would intuitively understand how to use the rest of the web site.

A good news was that the focus group did not face any problems with understanding how to use a web site, and how to look for a certain product. Moreover, women agreed with the choice of colours and fonts that I have used. They told that a mock-up looks nice, feminine, however, at the same time, it is not too girlish.



Since the focus group approved a web site and gave a high evaluation of a design, I am sure that our user interface design plan is going to work well. Thus, our team would be able to start running a business at the beginning of a next year.

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## Table of Figures

Figure 1 – Bisque shade



Figure 2 – Light Coral shade



Figure 3 – Wisdom Script Font



**Figure 4 – Oswald Font**



Figure 5 – Blog view

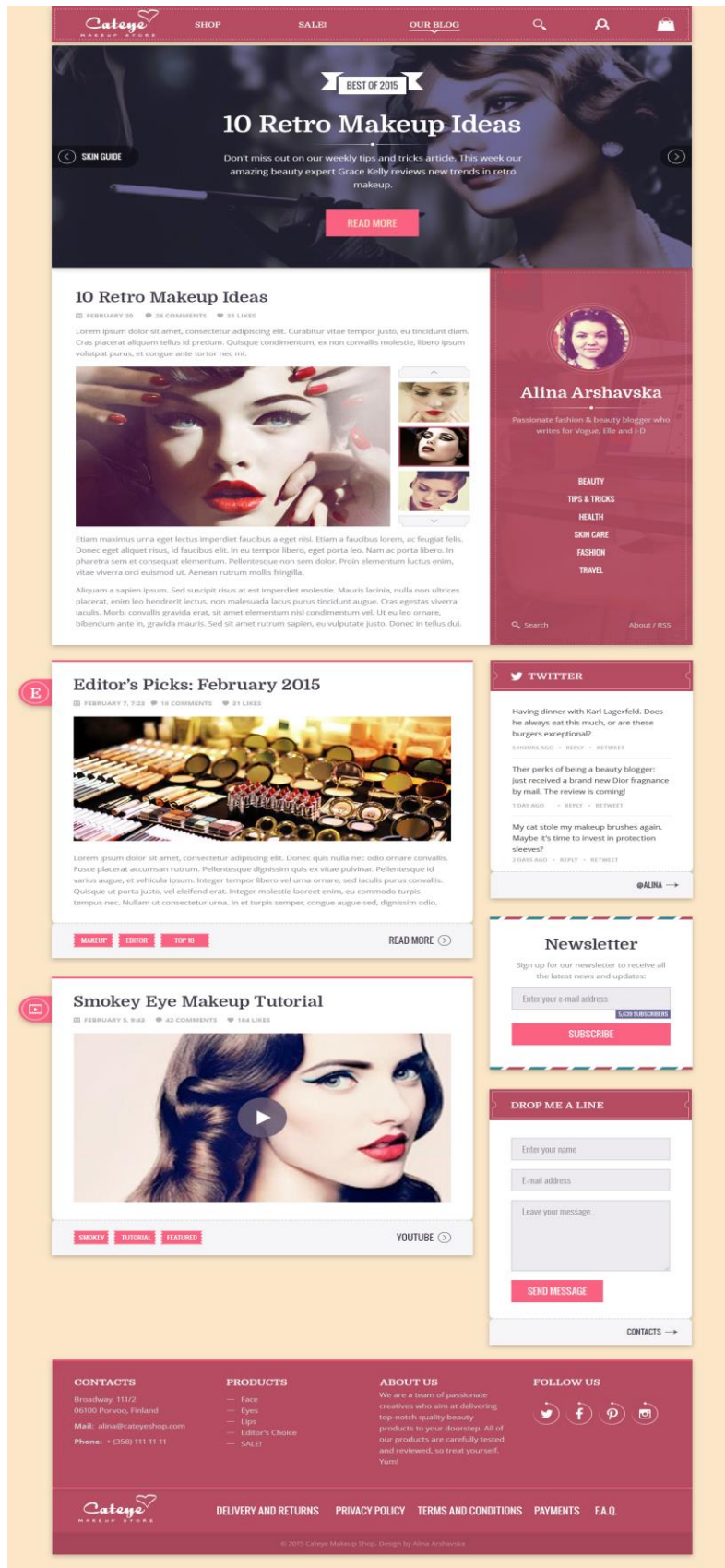


Figure 6 – Blog with Comments

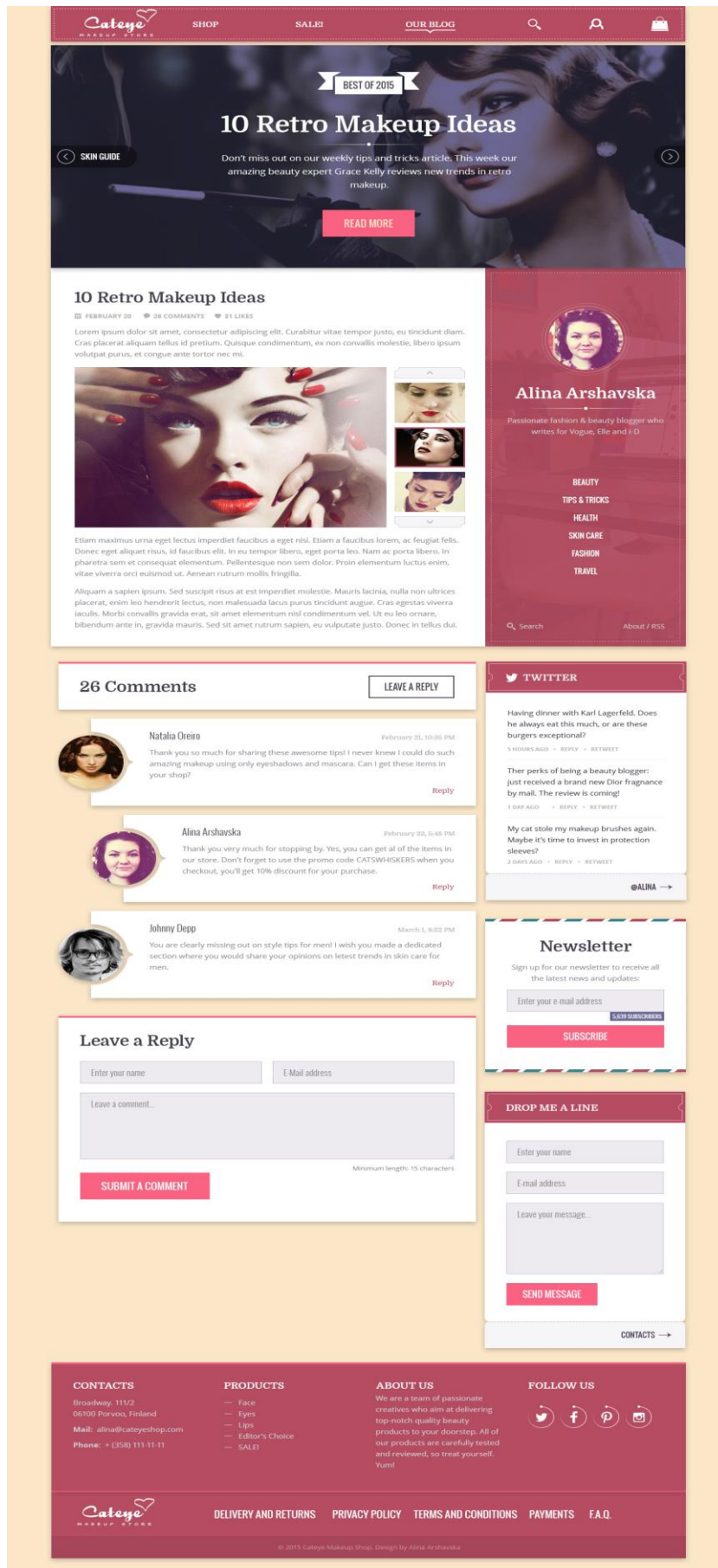




Figure 7 – Front page

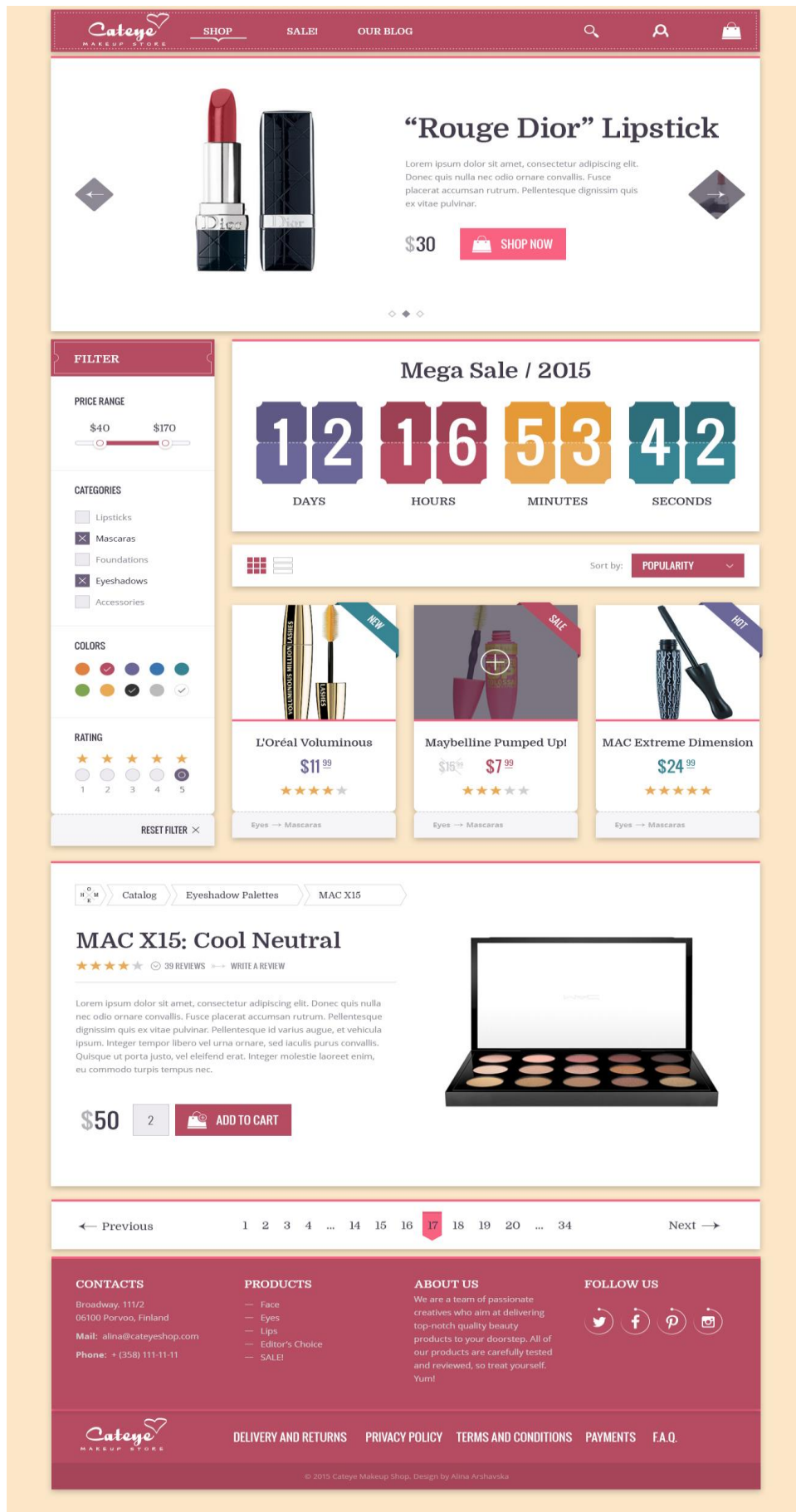


Figure 8 – Front Page with Dropdowns and Search Fields

